

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PPT-01 SCA-01 L-03 CPR-01

VO-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 /040 W

----- 106450

P R 131340Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7674

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USDOC WASHDC

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KUWAIT POUCH BAGHDAD; ATHENS FOR RTDO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, ETRD, BTRA, SY

SUBJECT: REQUIREMENTS FOR SYRIAN VISAS

REF: KUWAIT 2211 (NOTAL),

1. CONSULAR OFFICER DISCUSSED CONTENTS OF REFTEL WITH FOREIGN

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MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS MAY 12. LATTER CONFIRMED THAT FONMIN HAD CIRCULARIZED NEW VISA REQUIREMENTS TO ALL SYRIAN EMBASSIES ABOUT ONE MONTH AGO STATING THAT HENCEFORTH ALL FOREIGNERS APPLYING FOR SYRIAN VISAS OUTSIDE THEIR NATIVE COUNTRIES WILL BE REQUIRED TO PRESENT LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND RECOMMENDATION FROM THEIR EMBASSIES. THIS REQUIREMENT WAS EFFECTIVE UPON RECEIPT OF THE INSTRUCTION. OFFICIAL SAID IT HAD NOT BEEN PROMULGATED IN OFFICIAL GAZETTE NOR HAD EMBASSIES IN DAMASCUS BEEN INFORMED OF IT BECAUSE MFA CONSIDERED IT AN INTERNAL REGULATORY MATTER.

2. OFFICIAL EXPLAINED THAT REQUIREMENT HAD BEEN DECIDED ON BECAUSE "MOST COUNTRIES REQUIRE SUCH LETTERS OF SYRIANS APPLYING FOR VISAS OUTSIDE SYRIA. ON BASIS OF RECIPROCITY, SYRIA DECIDED IT WOULD HAVE TO REQUIRE SUCH LETTERS FROM ALL FOREIGNERS". CONOFF POINTED OUT THAT U.S. DOES NOT REQUIRE SUCH LETTERS OF SYRIANS AND ASKED IF EXCEPTION FOR AMCITS COULD BE OBTAINED ON BASIS OF RECIPROCITY. CONSULAR AFFAIRS DIRECTOR WAS SYMPATHETIC AND ACKNOWLEDGED LOGIC OF POINT BUT STATED THAT OWING TO POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS HE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO REQUEST SPECIFIC EXCEPTION FOR AMCITS FROM A MINISTRY INSTRUCTION ISSUED BY HIS SUPERIORS. HE STATED, HOWEVER, AT CONOFF'S URGING, THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO SUGGEST TO HIS SUPERIORS THAT CIRCULAR INSTRUCTIONS BE AMENDED TO EXEMPT THOSE FOREIGNERS WHOSE EMBASSIES DO NOT REQUIRE EMBASSY LETTERS FROM SYRIANS.

3. COMMENT: OFFICIAL WOULD NOT AGREE TO INFORM CONOFF WHEN AMENDMENT TO CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION ISSUED, AND WE UNCERTAIN AT THIS POINT JUST WHAT ACTION HE WILL TAKE. WE INTEND TO FOLLOW UP DEMARCHE PARA 1 WITH DIP NOTE AND ANOTHER MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS IN NEAR FUTURE. MEANWHILE, WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT AMCITS WHO ARE NOT BLACKLISTED CAN STILL OBTAIN TEMPORARY ENTRY VISAS AT AIRPORT OR BORDER CROSSING WHEN ENTERING SYRIA.

MURPHY

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